

Postmarks *Compiled by SSG Alberto Betancourt*

From Army Posts Around the World

Mindy Anderson



SPC Travis DeBois of the 260th QM Bn. at Hunter Army Airfield washes his clothes in the new barracks' laundry room.

Mindy Anderson



SPC Hiram Cebollero, also of HHC, 260th QM Bn., enjoys a favorite program on the big-screen television in the new barracks' day room.

Hunter Army Airfield, Ga.

Barracks Renovation Improves Quality of Life

A \$63 million barracks construction program has improved the quality of life for soldiers at Hunter Army Airfield, Ga.

Managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Savannah District, Phase I was recently completed at a cost of more than \$12 million.

"Our planners listened to the soldiers and incorporated

the functional aspects of design to provide a durable facility that meets their expectations," said COL Roger A. Gerber, commander of the Savannah District.

Phase I included three, three-story, new-standard-design barracks, each housing 48 soldiers. The

barracks' suites each have two private bedrooms, and a shared kitchenette and bathroom. The soldier community building in the complex has a laundry room, billiards room, recreation room, storage room and a small kitchenette. The exterior includes a courtyard with picnic tables, barbecue grills and basketball courts.

"Soldiers want to work for an Army that they feel is looking out for their best interests," said LTC Gerald Davie, garrison commander, Hunter Army Air-

field. "If they feel that's the case, they're going to be more loyal and more productive—it just makes sense."

SFC Curtis Thomas, barracks NCOIC for the 260th Quartermaster Battalion, said providing adequate housing sends a strong message to soldiers, especially "first-termers," that the Army will take care of them.

"Quality of life is really important to the young soldiers," he said. "New soldiers come here and they can't believe they'll be living in these barracks."

Soldiers new to Hunter AAF may be impressed with the renovated barracks, but soldiers who lived in the 1950s-era "pinwheel" barracks especially appreciate the improved quality of life.

"These new barracks are awesome," said SPC Travis DeBois, of the 416th Transportation Company. "I really like the laundry room—we only had two washers and two dryers for each floor in the old barracks, now we have 24 to choose from."

"A high level of expectation has now been set for these young soldiers," said Davie. "When they leave here, they'll expect the same standards or better."

The barracks project is scheduled to be completed in June, 2003. — *Mindy Anderson, USACE Savannah District Public Affairs Office*

Fort Riley, Kan.

Prairie Post Gets TV Show

A NEW television program designed to get people "In Step With Fort Riley" recently began airing on the local Fox network station.

"In Step With Fort Riley" is the first program of its kind, according to Gary Skidmore, the post's command information officer. "This is something new for the Army and for the television networks."

Each week, the program will bring a slice-of-life view of the prairie post into thousands of homes. Future planned segments of "In Step" include news updates that are important to soldiers, family members and retirees in the area—such as facts about the post and its history, interviews with military leaders and one-on-one discussions with those who provide the many services available at Fort Riley.

The program will also spotlight many activities, from recreation to education and military training, that take place on the installation.

"Additionally, the program will provide a means of communicating weekly with the public on issues that require immediate exposure to neighboring



Gary Skidmore, Fort Riley's command information officer, interviews MG Thomas F. Metz, the first guest to appear on "In Step With Fort Riley."

James Pritchett

communities," said Skidmore.
— *Christie Vanover, Fort Riley
PAO*

Salta, Argentina

Exercise Helps Forge Future Peacekeepers

NEARLY 570 U.S. troops, along with armed forces members from eight Latin American countries, gathered in Argentina for Exercise Cabañas 2001.

"It's the largest joint-nation exercise held in Latin America," said LTC Nicolas Britto, exercise spokesman with the U.S. Special Operations Command, South. "The exercise objective is to train the joint military forces for future United Nations peacekeeping duties."

Participating in the exercise were Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. Mexico and Columbia sent observers.

"This exercise is the last



Argentine army Lt. Col. Julio de la Cruz discusses airdrop operations with representatives of the eight nations that participated in Exercise Cabañas 2001.

phase of a year-long effort," said Britto. "This is where the participants test that training."

During the exercise the troops dealt with everything

from demining operations to resolving conflicts between warring factions.

"If what these troops learned here about dealing with

mines saves one life, then the money spent on this training exercise will have been worth it," he said.

"The situations we put the troops through are complex," said Air Force Col. O.G. Mannon, USSOCS deputy commander. "We make the tests hard because U.N. duty can be tough, and unexpected things happen all the time."

He said the exercise required close communication and cooperation among participants. And in a region where the politics of one nation sometimes differ with those of another, or where some of the participants have fought each other in the past, joint training helps promote understanding among the nations' militaries.

"The way they've worked together here," said Mannon, "is exactly how they'll have to work when they do it for real at some U.N. outpost." — *Master Sgt. Louis A. Arana-Barradas, Air Force News*

Fort Richardson, Alaska

Alaskans Display National Pride

HUNDREDS of students from schools at Fort Richardson, Alaska, stood side by side to form the word "proud" as their teachers held up a large American flag on Buckner Field.

Alaska National Guard CPT Bryan Keese, the organizer of the event, said the students had a two-fold message. "They wanted to honor those who continue fighting against drug and alcohol abuse, and those who were killed and wounded as a result of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks."

He said the Alaska National Guard has been involved with



Ursa Minor and Ursa Major school students display their American spirit while their teachers hold up an American flag.

the Drug Demand Reduction Program for almost 10 years. The program helps educate young people and their parents on the value of healthy lifestyles.

"Alcohol and drugs are the biggest killers of those under

the age of 25," Keese said. "Drug use has actually increased over the past year after a steady decline over the past 20 years." — *Alaska Department of Military and Veterans Affairs*